



Press Release

August 27, 2002

Kentucky Beef Network Announces Opening of Six Custom Weaning/Backgrounding Centers across the State to Help Beef Producers Bring Quality Products to Market

Lexington, Ky. . . The Kentucky Beef Network (KBN), a special project started by the Kentucky Cattlemen's Association in July 2001, with the Phase I Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement Funds, announces the opening of six Custom Weaning/Backgrounding Centers across Kentucky. The Centers located in Perry, Boyle, Logan, Daviess, Crittenden and Warren counties are operated by experienced producers who are working together with the KBN to help beef producers who lack facilities, time, or the expertise to wean cattle.

The Custom Weaning/Backgrounding Centers gives beef producers a marketing advantage by moving the sale of cattle from the traditional market low in the fall to a better market in the winter or early spring. The cattle are more attractive to buyers because they have been weaned, vaccinated, and gained weight in addition to commingling with other cattle and eating and drinking from troughs. "Ultimately this gives producers the advantages of a much larger operation while maintaining their independence," said John P. Stevenson, director of the KBN.

The Centers also gives producers the opportunity to evaluate management practices and marketing programs. The KBN provides producers the tools for accurate record keeping and herd assessment and personnel are available to assist with farm records entry and evaluation. "Marketing is also a key aspect of the program because we need to let buyers know that Kentucky cattle is healthy, tracked, weighted and ready. To that end, we have several routes we can go such as Internet sales, regular auctions, CPH-45 sales, alliances with other states and direct sales through order buyers. This is something Kentucky producers haven't had in the past," said Stevenson.

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For cattlemen who aren't in the immediate area of one of the Centers, KBN and the Center operators will make every effort to get the cattle to the Center. Producers will also have the advantage of working with local suppliers, securing financing from local banks, and KBN will guarantee their loans to help get them started in the program.

There are many details of the program that are available from the Center operators, KBN Facilitators, the KBN office in Lexington (859-278-0899), and on the KBN website at www.kybeef.com.

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